European Council

PRESS
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STATEMENT AND REMARKS
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Informal meeting of EU heads of state or government on migration, 23 September 2015 - statement

Tonight we met to deal with the unprecedented migration and refugee crisis we are facing. We decided on a number of immediate priorities and had an in-depth discussion on how to achieve long-term sustainable solutions. We all recognised that there are no easy solutions and that we can only manage this challenge by working together, in a spirit of solidarity and responsibility. In the meantime we have all to uphold, apply and implement our existing rules, including the Dublin regulation and the Schengen acquis.

We ask the EU institutions and our Governments to work speedily on the Priority Actions proposed by the Commission. We want operational decisions on the most pressing issues before the October European Council, along the following orientations:

respond to the urgent needs of refugees in the region by helping the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Food Programme and other agencies with at least an additional 1 billion euro;
assist Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey and other countries in dealing with the Syrian refugee crisis, including through a substantial increase of the EU's Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian Crisis ("Madad Fund");
reinforce the dialogue with Turkey at all levels, including at the upcoming visit of the Turkish President (5 October), in order to strengthen our cooperation on stemming and managing the migratory flows;
assist the Western Balkan countries in handling the refugee flows, including through pre-accession instruments, as well as ensure a speedy and solid preparation of the Western Balkans route conference (8 October);
increase the funding of the Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing the root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa through additional contributions by Member States, and ensure an optimal preparation of the Valletta Summit (11-12 November) to achieve maximum progress;
tackle the dramatic situation at our external borders and strengthen controls at those borders, including through additional resources for Frontex, EASO and Europol, and with personnel and equipment from Member States;
meet requests from front-line Member States for assistance by the institutions, the agencies and other Member States in order to ensure identification, registration and fingerprinting of migrants (hotspots) and at the same time ensure relocation and returns, at the latest by November 2015;
enhance the funding of the Emergency Fund for Asylum, Integration and Migration and the Internal Security Fund-Borders.

As regards Syria, we call for a renewed UN-led international effort to bring an end to the war that has caused so much suffering and forced an estimated 12 million people to leave their homes; the EU commits to doing its part in this respect, as well as for the formation of a government of national unity in Libya.

The orientations agreed today must be complemented by the transposition and implementation by Member States of the rules of the Common Asylum System. In this context it is important to create the conditions for all Member States to participate fully in the Dublin system.

We urge institutions, agencies and Member States to accelerate their work on all aspects of the migration crisis. The Commission will present proposals on the mobilisation of the EU budget to support these orientations. Member States will match them with their contributions.

We will revert to the challenge of migration at the October European Council.

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